

**ANG****Bayan**

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Editorial

The incoming Aquino regime will be met head-on by the people's outcries

Benigno "Noy" Aquino III will apparently become the next leader of the neocolonial Philippine state based on the initial results of the recently concluded reactionary elections.

As soon as Aquino assumes power on June 30, the Filipino people are determined to push for the resolution of the longstanding basic political and socioeconomic issues afflicting them under the rotten semicolonial and semifeudal system.

The foremost demand of the Filipino people is the prosecution and punishment of Gloria Arroyo and her clique for all the crimes they had committed while in power.

They cry for justice for the countless cases of plunder, including the ZTE-National Broadband Network, IMPSA-Caliraya and Diosdado Macapagal Boulevard projects and the Fertilizer Fund and Swine Fund swindles where Arroyo and her ilk pocketed billions of pesos in bribes and kickbacks.

They demand justice and redress for the numerous human rights violations and crimes against humanity in the course of implementing Oplans Bantay Laya 1 and 2. Human rights advocates as well as the families, friends and supporters of the more than 1,000 victims of extrajudicial killings and the thousands more who were illegally arrested, tortured and detained, abducted and involuntarily disappeared; and the millions of victims of forced evacuations, theft, arson and destruction of homes and crops in

the hands of Arroyo's fascist troops cry out for justice.

The people want Arroyo to pay for her desecration of the nation's sovereignty in her implementation of US-imposed neoliberal policies. They cry for justice for her opening up of the country's land and natural resources to plunder by foreign corporations and for allowing US military intervention and permanent presence in the country. They will hold the Arroyo regime accountable for the release of Daniel Smith, the American soldier who was found guilty of raping Nicole in 2004.

The people will roundly condemn any hesitation on Aquino's part to pursue, arrest, prosecute and punish Arroyo and her clique amid their obstinacy and continued maneuverings.



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Meanwhile, Aquino's expected ascent to the executive branch of the reactionary government will pave the way for the return to power of the Aquino-Cojuangco hacendero clan. His regime will be rocked by the peasant masses' cries for genuine land reform, including justice for the victims of the Hacienda Luisita massacre, the scrapping of the bogus stock distribution option and the immediate distribution of the Cojuangcos' estate.

The Aquino-Cojuangcos insist on their continued control of Hacienda Luisita even as Aquino evades the issue of genuine land reform. His presidency is bound to bring to the fore the nationwide advance of the revolutionary struggle for genuine land reform and the emancipation of the peasant masses from feudal oppression.

Behind Aquino are foreign businessmen, big landlords, big compradors, the Aquino-Cojuangco family (the so-called "Kamag-anak Incorporated") and the pseudo-reformists who are all advocates of neocolonial, feudal and elitist policies. This early, even as they have yet to assume power, the various factions of the Aquino camp are al-

ready locked in bitter struggle as to who should dominate power, raid the public coffers and exploit the people.

Amid all this, the Filipino people are determined to demand from the new president the repeal of the neoliberal policies imposed by the IMF and rabidly enforced by the US-Arroyo regime and its predecessors. They call for an end to the plunder and destruction of agricultural lands and natural resources by imperialist corporations, big compradors and bureaucrat capitalists.

They call for the establishment of genuine national industries instead of semimanufacturing, export processing zones and outsourcing centers. They demand the scrapping of the labor export policy and the creation of solid employment instead of casual and contractual jobs and the guarantee of just and substantial wage increases for them to cope with the rising cost of living. The continuing and worsening international and domestic crisis are pushing the Filipino toiling masses and people to take the path of militant struggle.

Aquino will likewise be con-

fronted by patriotic demands of ending the permanent presence of American troops in the Philippines and the unequal agreements with the US. The patriotic forces and the people demand an end to the intervention of US troops in the country's internal military affairs, including the US' role in designing and planning the AFP's campaigns of suppression against anti-imperialist, progressive and democratic forces.

The US is ever intent on strengthening the ruling political system and neocolonial state in order to ensure and facilitate its longterm economic, political and military interests in the Philippines. The US aggressively urged Arroyo and her ruling class rivals to make the just concluded reactionary elections appear clean and credible in order to allay the contradictions among the rival factions of the reactionary ruling classes.

However, the contradictions and violent conflicts among rival reactionary factions continue to intensify due to the deepening economic crisis, decreasing state resources and their worsening political conflicts. The crisis of the ruling political system is bound to deepen and intensify further as Aquino attempts to wield power and Arroyo continues to scheme to remain in power and evade prosecution and punishment.

The reactionary puppet regime will continue to be rocked by contradictions among the ruling classes and the escalation of the people's resistance.

The revolutionary forces are faced with an exceedingly favorable opportunity to intensify revolutionary struggle. They are determined to advance along the path of people's war and carry forward the national and democratic aspirations of the Filipino people. **AB**



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The simmering Arroyo-Aquino conflict

While the reactionary faction of Benigno Aquino III focuses on assuming power in Malacañang at the end of June, the Arroyo clique continues to maneuver to make sure it will retain a significant share of state power as it intends to eventually reclaim complete control. If the Aquino camp fails to undertake decisive measures, the incoming president will become fair game for Arroyo's schemes.

By far, the threat of Arroyo extending her rule remains real. She is still prepared to exploit any confusion that may arise in the Congressional canvassing of votes for president and vice president. Mobilizing her allies in the current Congress, she can divert the canvassing towards the exposé and investigation of electoral fraud in order to cast doubt on the victory of Aquino and other candidates for national posts.

At the same time, Arroyo is proceeding with her treacherous schemes to control Congress and secure the Speakership sooner or later. She already has over 100 congressmen inside her bag aside from her allies who ran in the party-list elections. Arroyo will use her billions of pesos in stolen funds to control the congressmen. Due to a provision in this year's

budget handing over control of the congressmen's "pork barrel" from the president to the House Speaker, Aquino will have a hard time buying off congressmen like Arroyo did in the past nine years.

If Arroyo has her way and secures the post of Speaker, she is expected to put at the top of her agenda the drive to change the constitution to pave the way for her assumption as Prime Minister under a parliamentary system.

Arroyo has long prepared

for her eventual departure from Malacañang. She has seen to it that whoever becomes the



next president would have a hard job wielding power and holding her accountable. As early as March, she had appointed longtime loyalist Gen. Delfin Bangit as AFP chief. Despite vehement protests, she proceeded with the appointment last week of Renato Corona as new chief justice of the Supreme Court.

Arroyo's appointment of her loyal follower Corona is one of the first traps she has set to undermine Aquino. If Aquino opposes the appointment of Corona, the Arroyo clique can charge him with violating the constitution and impeach him. On the other hand, if Aquino accepts Corona, the Supreme Court is expected to make rulings against the actions of Malacañang. The appointment of Corona is intended to weaken Aquino's rule. Sure enough, this will not be the last trap that Arroyo aims to set up.

The bitter Aquino-Arroyo conflict reflects the depth and intensity of the contradictions among rival factions of the ruling classes.

The sharpening of this conflict will certainly lead to the further worsening of the crisis of the ruling political system that should be taken advantage of by the revolutionary movement. **AB**

"Electronic Garci"

Many were surprised and awed by the unexpected speed of the canvassing of votes in the country's first automated elections. Imperialists and big compradors praised it. Even the Aquino camp, which had repeatedly warned of a people's uprising if elections failed was dumbfounded.

But a few days later, reports and information regarding electoral fraud and irregularities started to emerge, along with cases of corruption in the Commission on Elections (COMELEC).

Many questions are waiting for

answers. How many of the more than 76,000 PCOS machines actually transmitted election results? Why did the COMELEC's central computer contain records of 153,902,003 voters, three times that of the actual number of regis-

tered voters? COMELEC Chairman Jose Melo also has to explain why he started reading poll results at 6:30 p.m. of election day when voting in the precincts closed at 7:00 p.m. at the earliest.

There is also widespread suspicion that the rigging of the elections was preprogrammed in the flash cards used in operating the PCOS machines. The COMELEC and Smartmatic-TIM, the foreign private company employed by the COMELEC refused to subject the contents of the flashcards to public scrutiny. A few days before the

elections, the counting machines turned out to be faulty so Smartmatic-TIM rushed to replace the flashcards. Various groups asked to be allowed to inspect the original flashcards and their replacements against Melo's order to have the faulty ones destroyed.

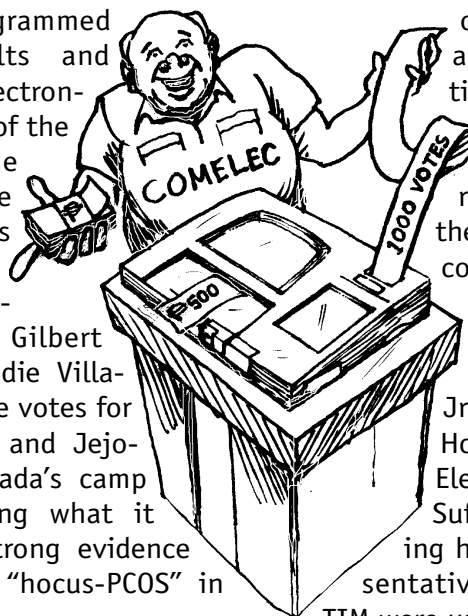
Doubts regarding the automated elections grew stronger when 67 PCOS machines were discovered in the residence of a Smartmatic-TIM technician in Antipolo. The COMELEC and Smartmatic-TIM said that the technician only did his job to secure the machines. But some parties believe that those machines were used to transmit manipulated election results. Upon analysis, it was discovered that the machines transmitted "election" results starting May 9 (the day before elections) until May 11. Many more complained about the discrepancies between the dates of the counting and the transmission of results to the COMELEC—with some even bearing dates starting as early as April. Unable to come up with a plausible explanation, Smartmatic-TIM downplayed the issue.

Meanwhile, a masked man claiming to be a former COMELEC technician appeared in a video where he claimed involvement in ballot-switching, using flashcards

with preprogrammed counting results and jamming the electronic transmission of the results to the COMELEC. Five million votes were allegedly shaved from Joseph Estrada, Gilbert Teodoro and Eddie Villanueva to pad the votes for Noyon Aquino and Jejomar Binay. Estrada's camp is now preparing what it claims to be strong evidence that there was "hocus-PCOS" in the elections.

There is also widespread concern over the discovery of sacks of flashcards, ballots and other election paraphernalia in a garbage dump in Cagayan de Oro City.

Former Solicitor General Francisco Chavez has threatened to charge COMELEC officials for their complicity in the cases of corruption and fraud, adding that Commissioner Rene Sarmiento is the only one untainted in the COMELEC. Former COMELEC lawyer Melchor Magdamo and Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting coordinator Dr. Arwin Serrano exposed anomalies such as the overpricing of election paraphernalia like ballot secrecy folders, the use



of fake indelible ink and the sale of election "victories."

Unable to dismiss the barrage of reported anomalies, the Lower House was compelled to conduct an inquiry into the matter. On May 19, Rep. Teodoro Locsin Jr., chairman of the House Committee on Electoral Reforms and Suffrage started holding hearings where representatives of Smartmatic-

TIM were unable to give satisfying answers to the questions they were asked, including those concerning the questionable dates and times of the transmission of results and the methods of determining whether the election returns were authentic or not.

As exposés and proofs emerge regarding the "electronic Garci," the honesty and credibility of the recent elections are increasingly put into question. Arroyo's allies in Congress are taking advantage of the investigation into the anomalies in the elections to delay up to June 30 or for as long as possible the proclamation of winners in the presidential and vice presidential elections. AB

The rotten May 10 elections

The recent elections is essentially no different from the ever rotten reactionary elections. Violence, money, deception and fraud still prevailed, placing old corrupt politicians in government positions.

Malacañang and Congress are still dominated by puppets of US imperialism. The same old administrators of the semicolonial and semifeudal system in the country and old guards of their class and self interests merely alternated in

holding positions.

Most striking is the return of the Aquino-Cojuangco clan to the highest position in the state.

Another salient example is the return to power of the family of the fascist dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

His widow Imelda won the congressional seat for Ilocos Norte, their elder daughter Imee clinched the governorship of the province and their son Ferdinand Jr. won as senator. More than 20 years since Marcos' ouster, their political careers are thriving while justice continues to evade the thousands of victims of the fascist dictatorship.

The Arroyo family remains in power. Gloria Arroyo herself, her two sons and her brother-in-law are poised to take seats in Con-

gress.

In Isabela, the Dy dynasty has returned by way of gross intimidation, vote buying and brazen electoral fraud. Faustino Dy III won the governorship while seven of his relatives won in different posts in the province. Chavit Singson won as governor of Ilocos Sur while twelve of his kin won various positions. In Pampanga, jueteng lord and close Arroyo ally Lilia Pineda clinched the governorship.

In the Senate, the same old names in politics and show business ruled the polls and are expected to continue the same old order and policies favoring the rotten ruling system.

Meanwhile, electoral space for progressive candidates and parties were reduced further. AFP soldiers openly campaigned to vilify them, removed their campaign posters and terrorized their voters. Several progressive parties, however, are still expected to win seats in Congress.

At the same time, the ruling classes aggressively defiled the party-list system which is supposed to grant Congressional representation to marginalized sectors. The Arroyo clique and other wealthy and powerful groups had established and are using many party-list groups to secure seats for their lackeys. Arroyo's elder son Mikey himself may become congressman ostensibly to represent security guards.

The results of the recent elections prove that they only serve to perpetuate and renew the prevailing rotten system in the country. In the final analysis, revolution is the only recourse for the people to realize fundamental and sustainable change. **AB**



NPA frees mayor, 4 escorts

The New People's Army (NPA) freed Lingig, Surigao del Sur mayor Roberto "Jimmy" Luna Jr. and his four escorts Pfc John Rey Abao and Pfc Arnel Dizon of the Philippine Army, and PO2 Boy de Castro and PO3 Alan Dapitanon of the Lingig Municipal Police Office.

They were released at around 5 p.m. on May 17 somewhere in the Diwata Mountain Range along the Agusan del Sur-Surigao del Sur-Compostela Valley triboundary, in accordance with the orders of the People's Democratic Government in Guerrilla Front 20 to the guerrillas of the Conrado Heredia Command-New People's Army (CHC-NPA).

Luna and his escorts were arrested by the people's army at a mobile checkpoint set up by the Red fighters of the CHC-NPA on May 5 while the group was on its way to Davao City. Seized from them were several firearms of various caliber. Luna was released after he confessed and apologized for his crimes against the people and for humanitarian considerations of appeals from his family, friends and various groups and individuals.

The mayor admitted to setting

up a private army composed of elements of the AFP, PNP and paid goons. He used them to advance his political and economic interests and in the process violated human rights.

The People's Court is still in the process of investigating his involvement in the killing of former Lingig mayor Amerosin V. Onsing in 2001 and the Suazo brothers in 1007; the seizure of 30 hectares of farmers' lands in Barangay Pagbacatan and Dahican Island; large-scale logging that destroyed the environment; violating human rights; and embezzling government funds.

While their detention has ended, the revolutionary legal and judicial processes will continue on Luna's cases. The investigations, on the other hand, are suspended in the case of his four escorts. **AB**

4 soldiers arrested in ComVal

RED fighters of the Crucifino Uballas Command of the New People's Army arrested Cpl. Marcial B. Bawagan, Cpl. Ariel P. Asumo and Cpl. Eduardo Alcala of the Philippine Army as well Victor Pitogo, a CAFGU element on May 12 in Barangay Concepcion, Mawab, Compostela Valley.

They were arrested because of their counterrevolutionary activities and violations of human rights in their areas of operation. In fact, a case has been filed against them before the Commission on Human Rights of the reactionary government but the concerned authorities have failed to take any action.

They are currently undergoing investigation. The NPA in Southern Mindanao has assured their families that the prisoners are being treated well in accordance with the provisions of International Humanitarian Law and the Protocols of War.

Meanwhile, in Negros Occidental, Pfc Fred Gustillo was wounded in an ambush by Red fighters on a team from the 61st IB that was on patrol in Sitio Libas, Barangay Basak, Bacolod City on May 12. **AB**

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GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO

U.S. PUPPET

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TRAITOR

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MURDERER

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NPA disarms poultry farm guards

THE New People's Army (NPA) disarmed guards of a poultry farm owned by despotic landlord Miguel Sola in Sitio Acapulco, Barangay Mahalang in Himamaylan, Negros Occidental on May 7. In a statement, the NPA Leonardo Panaligan Command said it was able to seize a KG9 machine pistol with 60 rounds of ammunition, a cal .38 revolver and other military equipment. Also seized were 18 fighting cocks owned by Sola.

The NPA raided the poultry farm because of the complaints of 25 families living nearby. Seven families lost their livelihoods and 18 families were no longer allowed to repair their houses since Sola built his farm in the area. The farm guards also mauled and threatened the residents.

NPA belies AFP's lies

THE Narciso Antazo Aramil Command of the NPA in Rizal strongly belied accusations by the Armed Forces of the Philippines that Red fighters ambushed government soldiers escorting Precinct Count Optical Scan (PCOS) machines in Sitio Kinabuan, Barangay Sta. Ines, Tanay, Rizal on May 12.

Pfc Roel Escote of the Philippine Army died in this ambush and an unidentified lieutenant was wounded.

It is not true that the military was securing the PCOS machines, said the NAAC. In fact, composite forces of the 22nd Division Reconnaissance Coy and the vicious 16th IB of the Philippine Army have been in the area since July launching intense operations where they have been harassing, terrorizing and accusing farmers, settlers and Dumagat tribespeople of being NPA members. Their military operations have caused extreme hardships among the people in the area.

The sniping operation took place on May 12 in Sitio Kinabuan, five kilometers from the polling precinct. The members of the Board of Election Inspectors (BEI) and Smartmatic had already brought the PCOS machines with them when they left in the morning of May 11.

Military propagandists are experts at lying to cover up their failures in the hands of the revolutionary movement, said NAAC spokesperson Macario Liwanag.

AFP covers up killing by soldiers in Abra

THE Philippine Army has imposed a news blackout on the killing by soldiers of the 41st IB Bravo Coy of Levi Mamac, 22, on May 1. Mamac, a resident of Barangay Tampalac in Lacub town, Abra was killed by soldiers under 1Lt. Federico Morales' command.

The Philippine National Police has refused to investigate the incident despite the soldiers' admission that they killed the victim. The soldiers suddenly left the area on May 2.

Also in May, troops of the 41st IB Charlie Coy defecated in the drinking water tank of residents of Barangay Mataragan in Malibcong town. The very angry residents demanded that Philippine Army officers punish the soldiers involved. The arrogant military officers have refused to listen to the residents.

Surface Embati— NPA-FSMR

THE Valentin Palamine Regional Operational Command (VPROC) of the New People's Army in Far South Mindanao called on the Philippine Army to immediately surface Serafin Tababa Embati, 47, who was abducted by three operatives of the 39th IB in Magsaysay, Davao del Sur in the morning of May 7.

Embati (Ka Lotlot), who hails from Barangay Nabundasan, Tulunan, North Cotabato, is an NPA member who has long been on medical leave because of health problems.

He was on his way to a hospital when military elements abducted him at the Magsaysay town center.

Ka Lotlot may die in the hands of the military if he is not given prompt medical attention for his severe kidney ailment. Many witnesses also saw how the military agents beat him up when they stopped the motorcycle he was riding.

He was bleeding from his head when he was abducted by the soldiers.

The VPROC called on the military to respect international humanitarian law and accord Ka Lotlot his rights.

Meanwhile, unknown assailants shot and killed Jim Gales, 32, a driver of Bayan Muna, in Barangay Little Panay, Panabo City, Davao del Norte on May 19, at around 2 p.m.

Gales sustained more than ten gunshot wounds to the body. He was riding his motorcycle when he was shot with M16 rifles.



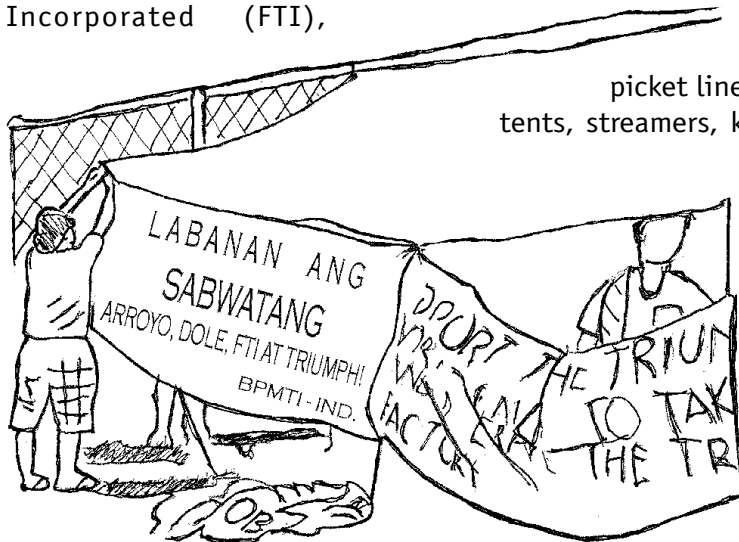
Goons breach Triumph picket line

Guards, goons and PNP elements violently demolished the picket line of Bagong Pagkakaisa ng mga Manggagawa sa Triumph International (BPMTI) on May 4 in Taguig City.

Tanggol Kabuhayan Pilipinas reported that the demolition was conducted after a court issued a Temporary Restraining Order (TRO) in favor of the company and declared the strike illegal. The Pasig City sheriff came to enforce the TRO along with 100 guards of the government-owned Food Terminal Incorporated (FTI),

more than 50 bonnet-clad goons, 30 elements of the PNP-Taguig and *barangay ta-nod* (village guards) from Western Bicutan. The sheriff warned the strikers that they must dismantle their picket line in five minutes.

After five minutes had elapsed, the FTI guards immediately demolished the picket line. They destroyed tents, streamers, kitchen ware, tables, water jugs and even the sewing machines the strikers had been using to earn some money to tide them over during the strike.



Still not content, the goons forcibly entered the union office at the back of the factory. Five union leaders were harassed and dragged out of the office. They sustained lacerations and fractures. The policemen also attempted to demolish the reestablished picket line on May 6 while the workers were having a dialogue with management.

The workers immediately condemned the harassment, intimidation and surveillance perpetrated against them. They demanded that the government withdraw the TRO. They also demanded that management hold a dialogue with the union leaders and grant the workers' rightful benefits and other demands.

They also called for support from their fellow workers, from church people and other groups in filing a case before the Swiss OECD National Contract Point against Triumph International's unjust termination of its workers in the Philippines and Thailand.

The workers have been maintaining their picket line for ten months now to protest their termination and the company's closure. **AB**

17,000 new PUP students allowed to enroll

COLLECTIVE action by students of the Polytechnic University of the Philippines (PUP) and their parents reaped success anew when the PUP administration allowed the enrollment of 17,000 new students when school opens this June.

The PUP administration had earlier announced that it would only admit 7,000 students this coming school year. But after mass actions and a dialogue conducted by students and parents with officials of the Commission on Higher

Education (CHED), 10,000 more students who had passed the university entrance examinations were allowed to enroll.

The students also resisted and frustrated plans by the PUP administration to demand a ₱6,000 tuition fee (or ₱250 per unit) from students enrolling at the College of Technology.

The PUP administration had planned on forcing a large percentage of incoming students to enroll at the College of Technology. Cen-

tral Student Council chair Chaser Soriano assailed the PUP administration for giving false hopes to students who had passed the entrance examinations that they would be able to take the courses they wanted, unaware that the administration wanted to force them to take courses that had higher tuition fees.

On March 29, the PUP Board of Regents revoked a 1,567% tuition fee increase after a series of intense protest actions by students.

Kalinga broadcaster wounded in slay attempt

RADYO ng Bayan broadcaster Jerome Tabanganay, 44, was wounded in a slay attempt in Bulanao Norte, Kalinga on May 15. The National Union of Journalists of the Philippines (NUJP) said two men riding a motorcycle shot Tabanganay while he was in the radio station waiting for the start of his program.

A man had approached Tabanganay twice and asked his name. He was later shot four times and was hit in the knee and calf.

Tabanganay often assailed criminality and government corruption in his program.

Maoists ambush policemen in India

THE latest offensive launched by fighters of the People's Liberation Guerrilla Army (PLGA) was a success when they ambushed policemen riding a bus in Dantewada district, Chhattisgarh state in India on May 17. The front part of the bus was smashed after being hit by an explosive.

Initial reports indicate that more than 20 police officers and personnel were among the casualties. Other local television stations put the number of casualties at 50.

On April 6, government forces suffered 76 casualties in a series of ambushes launched by the PLGA as they thwart the Indian reactionary government's Operation Green Hunt.

Urban poor residents thwart demolition

RESIDENTS of an urban poor community in Quezon City succeeded in thwarting the demolition of their homes through collective action.

Some 700 residents of Sitio San Roque, Barangay Bagong Pag-asa in North Avenue, Quezon City flexed their collective strength when they barricaded EDSA on May 14. The Kalipunan ng Damayang Mahihirap (KADAMAY) said the urban poor were strongly opposed to the Quezon City-Central Business District (QC-CBD) project which will lead to the eviction of impoverished residents and destroy their homes. KADAMAY said the poor would not benefit from this project anyway.

The National Housing Authority (NHA) agreed with the residents' demand to postpone the demolition even beyond the 30-day reprieve granted the affected communities.

Nonetheless, KADAMAY advised the residents to remain vigilant because the demolition teams may attack anytime and may even resort to sabotage such as burning down the communities. They must also be ready to set up the barriers

again because the NHA decision did not provide a concrete solution.

The QC-CBD is a major project of Mayor Feliciano Belmonte Jr. of Quezon City (now congressman-elect of the city's fourth district). He plans to transform 250 hectares of land in the city center into a commercial center.

A coalition formed by KADAMAY and the Confederation for the Unity, Recognition and Advancement of Government Employees (COURAGE) has been opposing the QC-CBD since 2008. The project will affect 30,000 urban poor families who will be losing their homes and livelihoods. A number of government offices and agencies will also be forcibly relocated or abolished, thus endangering the jobs of thousands of government workers. The Golden Acres Home for the Aged has already been transferred and the Parks and Wildlife Bureau Nature Center will also be adversely affected.

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